

**NEWPORT COUNTY CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 2, 2005**

MEETING MINUTES:

The meeting began at 12:10 p.m.

IN ATTENDANCE WERE:

Chairwoman Councilperson Jeanne-Marie Napolitano, Gail Alofsin, J. Clement Cicilline, Don Desrosiers, Richard Sardella, Mark Stenning and Councilperson Charles Vaillancourt

STAFF PRESENT WERE:

Evan Smith, Cathy Morrison, Debbie Gatta, Kathryn Farrington and Mary Ann Kelly

GUESTS PRESENT:

I. PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES:

The previous meeting minutes were reviewed. A motion to accept the minutes was made by Richard Sardella and seconded by Councilperson Charles Vaillancourt. The motion passed unanimously.

II. TREASURER'S REPORT:

Evan Smith read the treasurer's report. City Tax was up 5.55% and Regional Tax was up 6.23% for a combined growth of 5.71%. A motion to accept the treasurer's report was made by J. Clement Cicilline and seconded by Mark Stenning. The motion passed unanimously.

III. STAFF REPORTS:

Each Staff Report will now reflect the figures of the previous month's activity.

A. CONVENTION & TOURISM:

The convention sales team is in Boston for a 3 day sales blitz. There was a reception last night at Smith & Wolensky for 32 meeting

planners.

Last week the NCCVB sponsored the NY Chapter MPI.

This weekend the NCCVB will exhibit at the AAA Marketplace at Gillette Stadium in Foxboro, MA.

The NCCVB will exhibit at Discover New England the first week of April.

Bookings were up compared to last year and the number of room nights was up for February. As for the number of leads they were down and the wedding leads were the same compared to last year's numbers. The main source of leads is still the internet.

Business booked for February was from numerous organizations resulting in 3,241 total room nights with an economic impact of \$1,561,154.00.

The number of Tour Operator leads was up compared to last year's numbers in February. The number of room nights was down compared to last year at this time. Travel agent leads are the same compared to last year in February.

B. MARKETING:

The new travel guide is coming out next Tuesday. It will be presented at the Marketing Meeting on March 16th at the Hotel Viking.

The NCCVB is listing a banner on our shopping and dining websites in cooperation with the Chamber of Commerce to advertise their Newport County Gift Certificate.

Tour RI will take place on May 7th during National Tourism Week.

Numerous meetings and activities took place in February. The NCCVB Marketing Meeting was held at the Atlantic Beach Club on February 16th. 100 people attended.

Print media placements received for February was equivalent to \$90,385.00 in advertising costs.

C. OPERATIONS:

The engineering department at the Visitors Bureau has just finished taking down the 16 screen monitor on the first floor. Renovations will begin soon on the restrooms. RIPTA has received a bid for our HVAC system. It came in at \$90,000.00 and includes labor, removal, and installation of new HVAC equipment.

MEDIA LEADS:

AAA Going Places, Naples Daily News, Successful Meetings

MEDIA PLACEMENTS:

Boston Globe, Seatow's Lifelines, Everything America, Food Network

INFORMATION CENTER:

The total number of visitors to the Information Center for February was 15,745, down 18.88% from last February. The total number of visitors to the Information Center for the year was 21,749, down 16.77% compared to last year at this same time. The main source of visitors still comes from the New England states.

IV. NEW BUSINESS:

A motion to approve the allocation of surplus bed tax funds was made by Richard Sardella and seconded by Councilperson Charles Vaillancourt. It passed unanimously.

A motion to accept the 2005-2006 Budget was made by Councilperson Charles Vaillancourt and seconded by Gail Alofsin. It

passed unanimously.

J. Clement Cicilline made a motion to name the 3rd floor conference room the Paul Crowley Conference Room and to place individual plaques on the 1st floor for the departing board members with their years of service. It was seconded by Richard Sardella and passed unanimously.

There was discussion regarding the proposed RIHTA legislation that has been sent to the State of Rhode Island General Assembly. This document is asking for a change in how the state routes its tourism dollars and also to establish a steering committee for the state. A motion to oppose the legislation was made by Councilperson Jeanne-Marie Napolitano and seconded by Richard Sardella. An amended motion was made by Councilperson Charles Vaillancourt to draft a letter opposing the legislation, but the letter is not to be forwarded unless the legislation comes out of committee and is needed. It was seconded by Richard Sardella and passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Mark Stenning requesting the Newport County Convention & Visitors Bureau to write a letter to Paul Rodrigues, Middletown Town Council President, supporting the proposed reduction of the Middletown zoning code to 1,000 square feet per hotel room allowing Middletown to remain competitive with Newport. It was seconded by Councilperson Charles Vaillancourt and passed

unanimously.

Board members were asked to update and return their personal information sheet to Mary Ann Kelly.

V. OLD BUSINESS:

Evan will send a letter updating each individual who applied to fill a vacancy on the NCCVB Board of Directors.

VI. ADJOURNAMENT:

The next board meeting will be Tuesday, May 3rd at noon.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:10 p.m.